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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ZAGREB 000655

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SCE, EUR/PPD; OSD FOR POPOVICH

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [HR](#)

SUBJECT: EUR DAS JONES MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER GORDAN  
JANDROKOVIC

Classified By: POL/ECON COUNS Rick Holtzapple, Reasons 1.4 b/d

SUMMARY

11. (C) EUR DAS Stuart Jones visited Zagreb on September 10 and met with Croatian FM Gordan Jandrokovic. Jandrokovic opened the meeting by stressing that Croatia's top foreign policy priorities are NATO membership, EU accession, and establishing good relations with its neighbors. Jandrokovic thanked the US for its support of Croatia in all three areas.

The conversation then focused on regional issues. Jandrokovic described relations with Serbia as crucial, but difficult. He said Croatia would soon open an embassy in Pristina, but hoped Kosovar officials would be more pro-active in their diplomacy. He stressed Croatian support for strengthening Bosnia as a country, and described support for a third entity among some Bosnian Croats as "stupid" and "unacceptable to us." END SUMMARY

SERBIA

12. (C) Jandrokovic said good relations with Serbia were a key to stability in the region. The GoC has tried to support pro-European forces in Belgrade, but have found it a difficult process as politicians in Serbia attempt to balance cooperation with the EU with a less cooperative stance toward neighbors such as Croatia. Croatia was looking and hoping for signals of a more constructive attitude from Belgrade, but, Jandrokovic said, "so far we did not get any."

KOSOVO

13. (C) Jandrokovic said that Croatia's consistent message to Belgrade was that it needed to accept reality on Kosovo. Croatia was in the process of nominating its first ambassador to Pristina, and should open an embassy there shortly. Croatia was committed to helping Kosovo build its relationship with the EU, and Croatian businesses were very interested in potential opportunities there. Jandrokovic did complain, however, that Kosovar officials needed to be more active in their own diplomacy. As an example, he noted that he had never had a request from any Kosovar official to meet with him. He hoped Kosovo's new FM would be more engaged, saying that "he needs to come see me and tell me what they want" in terms of support from Croatia. DAS Jones said he would pass that message to the Kosovars during his visit to Pristina the next day. Jandrokovic added that the GoC believed Montenegro and Macedonia would likely recognize Kosovo soon, and that Croatia was encouraging such a step. DAS Jones noted US opposition to Serbia's attempt to have the UNGA refer Kosovar independence to the ICJ. FM Jandrokovic said Croatia would support the US position.

## BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

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14. (C) Jandrokovic noted that Croatia needed Bosnia to succeed. Croatian businesses were very active there, but Croatia's biggest interest was to ensure that the Croatian population in B-H stayed in B-H. Croatia was worried, however, by the lack of political consensus in B-H. In the GoC's view, B-H needs a new Constitution and it needs Lajcak and the OHR to remain in place. Right now, the Croatian community in B-H is feeling insecure and uncomfortable, and this has created serious internal divisions. Croatia's key priority in any political reform for B-H, therefore, was to ensure that ethnic Croats remained one of the three constituent nations. This was not only to reassure the Croatian community in B-H, but because without all three communities involved, B-H would fall apart into a Serb-dominated state and a Bosniak-dominated state. Jandrokovic said it was increasingly clear to Croatia that Dodik's goal is to have a separate Serb state; there had been questions about this earlier, but it now seems clear to Zagreb that this is Dodik's ambition. Croatia would oppose this, but the political situation of Croats continued to be perilous, he said, citing a recent decision to disenfranchise 2000 ethnic Croatian voters from the Posavina region around Derventa in the Republika Srpska for the upcoming local elections.

15. (C) Jandrokovic was very outspoken in opposition to Bosnian Croat proposals for a "third entity." He said that HDZ 1990 leader Ljubic's support for such a notion was "stupid" and "unacceptable to us." "He must think of the

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future of Croats there, and must be more constructive." DAS Jones noted that at dinner the previous evening it had been Dodik who had first supported a third entity, and then been supported by Ljubic, and noted that this was a signal of how risky the idea was. Jandrokovic nodded, and said he was confident that HDZ BiH leader Covic had not supported such ideas at the dinner. DAS Jones said that was correct. Jandrokovic again commented that the "Europeanization" of B-H was the best solution, as it would allow Croats to stay in B-H. He said that if we can show them that they are an important part of the political process there, then the Croatian community would be very constructive. The problem is that the Croats were too insecure and afraid of what might happen, so they retreat to the idea of a third entity, which Jandrokovic described as both the wrong policy and an unachievable one.

16. (C) DAS Jones asked about GoC views of the OHR, and suggestions that it was time to close it down. Jandrokovic replied that this was a very bad idea. It would reward Dodik's bad behavior. The B-H Croats had seen Dodik challenge Lajcak, and go unpunished, and this had encouraged the B-H Croats to begin picking fights with Lajcak as well. What B-H needed was for the EU to re-focus its attention on Bosnia. If Bosnia was unstable, then the entire region would be unstable. But he said he was not sure senior EU officials understood this.

## MONTENEGRO

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17. (C) Jandrokovic said relations with Montenegro were very good, and this was another country of great interest to Croatian business people. From Zagreb's perspective the Montenegrins seemed a bit nervous about the situation in the region, and were still navigating how to get a bit more "distance" from Belgrade.

## MACEDONIA

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18. (C) Croatia was very supportive of Macedonia, but it was

unclear to Zagreb what could be done to solve the name issue.

Jandrokovic said that when Macedonian FM Milososki told him that Greece "cannot hold Macedonia hostage forever" that he had warned him that maybe Greece could. Jandrokovic felt that now was the time for the GoM to make the tough decisions necessary and to secure their state and identity. Skopje needed to make a compromise and "choose which bad scenario is the better one for them." DAS Jones said that the parties would meet again the week of September 15 in NY and UN envoy Nimetz would have some new proposals. Jandrokovic said Croatia would do whatever it could to support, and said "just tell us of the ideas you would like us to support" and Croatia would be ready to weigh in, particularly with Milososki, whom Jandrokovic said he knew and got along with very well.

19. (U) DAS Jones has cleared this cable.  
Bradtke